

WEBER THOMPSON



MEETING MINUTES

TODAY'S DATE: 090618 MEETING #: Workshop #3
MEETING DATE: _____
PROJECT NAME: SLU Urban Design Framework PROJECT #: 09-016 SERVICE: C / UD
SUBJECT: Street Character and Connections
LOCATION: Weber Thompson, 225 Terry Ave N. CR #4

ATTENDING:	CLIENT NAME	COMPANY NAME	INITIALS
	Marshall Foster	City of Seattle, OPM	MF
	Jim Holmes	City of Seattle, DPD	JH
	Darby Watson	City of Seattle, SDOT	DW
	Geoffrey Wentlandt	City of Seattle, DPD	GW
	Peter Dobrovolny	City of Seattle, DPD	PD
	Eric Tweit	City of Seattle, SDOT	ET
	Dan Foltz	Weber Thompson	DF
	Catherine Benotto	Weber Thompson	CB
	Brian Steinburg	Weber Thompson	BS
	Jim Westcott	Weber Thompson	JW
	Dan Albert	Weber Thompson	DA
	Peter Greaves	Weber Thompson	PG
	Amanda Keating	Weber Thompson	AK
	Jeff Benesi	Mithun	JB
	Mahlon Clements	Bumgardner	MC
	Matt Roewe	Via Architects	MR
	John Savo	NBBJ	JS
	John Pearson	LUOA	JP
	Lloyd Douglass	CNC	LD
	Sharon Coleman	Vulcan	SC

Introduction

Recap of Workshop #2:

1. Gateways
 - a. Infrastructural Gateways (i.e. engineering solution needs artistic expression)
 - b. Architectural Gateways (i.e. corners or specific axis that needs artistic expression)
 - c. Processional Gateways (i.e. utilizing landscape, art, or architecture as a linear gateway experience)
2. Hearts
 - a. Regional / National Scale
 - b. Local / Citywide Scale
 - c. Neighborhood Scale
3. Edges
 - a. Topographic
 - b. Permeable
 - c. Infrastructural
4. Other
 - a. Civic hub opportunity at Denny Park and Teardrop site
 - b. Potential Lake to Bay Trail link from lake to teardrop site, down 8th, west on Thomas to Myrtle Edwards Park via proposed bridge
 - c. Mercer cannot be neglected as an urban design opportunity, even with heavy traffic it must still be a place.
 - d. Thomas identified as green street or major pedestrian street, potential link to Cap Hill.
 - e. Dexter, Westlake, Fairview seen as commercial / retail streets of significance leading to the lake.

Background Info:

1. Freight
 - a. Major I-5 access to / from Mercer
 - b. Major SR-99 access to / from Mercer via Republican on-off ramps
 - c. Major Westlake to 9th to Mercer
 - d. Potential Minor access is Broad to Thomas or Harrison (10 trucks or so per day?)
2. Bicycle Corridors
 - a. Dexter: Main commuter bike route
 - b. Eastlake: Main commuter bike route
 - c. 9th Avenue: 2-way bike lanes
 - d. Harrison: main E-W route for Bikes
3. Transit Corridors
 - a. Fairview: 10-20 minutes peak hours
 - b. Dexter: 10-20 minutes peak hours
 - c. Aurora: 10-20 minutes peak hours (proposed BRT route and stop at Thomas)
 - d. Westlake: 30 minute bus, trolley every 15 minutes
 - e. Terry from Thomas, north = trolley every 15 minutes

Purpose of Workshop #3:

1. Provide guidance to future charette teams so that they can study charette topics in more detail

2. Provide guidance to the City of Seattle for the SLU EIS and revisions to the neighborhood plan, design guidelines, etc.

Goals of Workshop #3:

1. Establish a street use hierarchy
 - Residential vs. Commercial
 - Transit / Traffic / Freight / Pedestrian / Bike Balance
 - Retail Core vs. neighborhood retail
 - Urban Trails (Lake to Bay Trail)
2. Establish a street character hierarchy
 - Street as Urban Room (3-D characteristics of streets)
 - Profile of street, maximizing potential
 - Green Street
 - Boulevards
 - Multi-use streets
 - View corridors
 - Location of Retail
3. Discuss Alley Character
4. Discuss Other Opportunities
 - Mid-block pedestrian connections
 - John street at Terry / Boren
 - E-W connections to Lake Union from Dexter
 - Street ends at Lake Union

Structure of Workshop #3:

1. ½ hour introduction and topic discussion with background info
2. 3 hours group break outs
3. ½ hour reporting

Team Reports

Team 1

1. Street Scale:

In general scale was discussed in several ways physically and experientially.

a. Scale of Recognition:

- Those out of town know Westlake, Mercer and Denny
- Those in town know Fairview and Dexter
- Those in neighborhood know most all of the streets intimately

b. Scale of Intensity:

- It was discussed that there are 4 levels of intensity that could help inform the quality of experience, location of retail, profile of the street, and the spatial characteristics of the urban room.
 - o **Level 1 Highest Intensity Street:** High Volume of traffic, including regional freight and transit (local and regional connector). Bicycles are probably not

encouraged on these streets. Parallel parking is encouraged as a buffer from the traffic. Pedestrian experience should be active, with significant retail and commercial or residential lobby frontage. Canopy creating (not columnar) Street Trees and landscape are encouraged. Examples include: Mercer Street.

- **Level 2 High Intensity Street:** Significant traffic, including local freight and transit. Bicycles are encouraged on these streets through dedicated lanes or otherwise. Parallel parking is encouraged as a buffer from the traffic. Pedestrian experience should be active, with significant retail and commercial or residential lobby frontage. Examples include: Dexter, Westlake, Fairview, Eastlake, 5th, and the new Aurora lid street (after the bored tunnel is built).
- **Level 3 Moderate Intensity Street:** Moderate traffic, including delivery freight only and could accept transit. Bicycles are encouraged on these streets through dedicated lanes or otherwise. Parallel parking is encouraged as a buffer from the traffic. Pedestrian experience should be attractive with mixed uses (residential and commercial) providing eyes on the street, and spot retail providing neighborhood services. Examples include: Valley, 6th, 9th, and Terry.
- **Level 4 Low Intensity Street:** Traffic calming measures may be employed in targeted areas if not the entire street. These streets are pedestrian and/or bicycle oriented, but may not support retail except at corners intersecting with Level 1,2,3 streets. These streets may be part of a larger trail network, "Green" streets, or purely residential streets where the street becomes a "front yard" for kids. On-street parking may be restricted or minimized in order to provide more space for landscape, sidewalk, or café spill-out spaces. Examples include: Thomas, 8th, Minor, and Pontius.
- **Some streets may be hybrids.** For example parts of Boren, Yale, and John may exude qualities of both type 3 and 4. Yale, has the proposed "green street" swales, but also has significant retail near REI.

c. Physical Scale of Street:

- It was discussed that the street profile should be maximized for pedestrian use. Traffic lanes should be minimized and sidewalks maximized.
- Center medians may humanize or break down the scale of wide streets creating a nice street canopy and pedestrian respite, or be considered wasted space that could be used to widen sidewalks. Even 1st Avenue in Pioneer Square has a median.

2. Types of Streets:

In general the following street types and their characteristics were discussed:

a. Boulevard:

- Wide Profile / Large Scale
- Primarily commercial focused with significant retail
- High intensity
- Commuter Street / Major connector
- Wider Sidewalks
- May have medians (where possible / appropriate)
- Canopy creating trees encouraged
- Pedestrian crossings are paramount, signal with bulbs, medians, special markings or paving.

b. Festival Street:

- Moderate Intensity

- Recognized locations of street closures for whole community scale gathering or celebrations. Not necessarily for smaller scale “block parties” or neighborhood gatherings (i.e. not every street that may hold these functions is a “festival street”, but a festival street may hold smaller scale event).
- Special design treatment may designate this dual use. Pavers, or special pavement, or streetscape design.
- Identified Locations:
 - o May be a temporary extension of a park (John St. at Denny Park, Pontius, Minor, Thomas, and Harrison at Cascade Playground, Valley Street at Lake Union)
 - o Terry Avenue
 - o Valley between Westlake and Boren (maybe to Fairview? Depends on access to lakefront properties from Boren and Terry).
- c. **Commercial / Retail Streets**
 - Moderate Intensity
 - Spot Retail, primarily at corners,
 - Encourage retail spillout at Green Streets.
 - Intersections in the 9th - Terry commercial core area
 - Identified Locations:
 - o 6th, 9th, Terry, Boren, Harrison, Republican
- d. **Pedestrian / Bike Primary Routes**
 - Low Intensity
 - Priority given to bikes and/or pedestrians, not vehicles, may be urban trails.
 - Identified Locations:
 - o Valley West of Westlake to 8th
 - o John Street between Boren and Terry
 - o E-W connectors between Dexter and Westlake
- e. **Green Streets**
 - Low Intensity
 - Priority given to bikes and pedestrians, not vehicles, may be urban trails. May have transit component, fixed rail would be best.
 - Green + streets may encourage water cleansing and/or retention design elements. Filtration may be problematic due to soil contamination and legal restrictions.
 - Canopy producing street trees encouraged
 - Under canopy plantings
 - Street furniture
 - Traffic calming measures
 - Slim lanes to absolute minimum
 - Prioritize landscape over parking
 - Vary by neighborhood / use / traffic or transit needs
 - o Setbacks / no setbacks?
 - o Height of adjacent buildings
 - o Width of lanes
 - o Fixed transit corridors
 - Identified Locations:
 - o 8th Avenue:
 - Minimize street profile to 1 lane with no parking
 - Maximize public space

- Consider closure of the blocks between John and Republican, and at the Teardrop site.
 - Utilize existing street canopy and expand with similar canopy
 - Part of Lake to Bay Trail
 - Use ROW for recreational uses
 - Flexible street use.
 - Thomas
 - Most streets in Cascade Neighborhood, John and Taylor
3. **Alleys:**
In general the following alley issues were discussed:
- a. **Alley Reorientation (E-W)**
 - E-W orientation would be a tough thing to achieve with all the stakeholders, and city process.
 - E-W orientation may allow up to 20% energy savings.
 - E-W orientation could limit the ability of N-S streets being Pedestrian only, or urban trails because cars would have to use the N-S street to access the alley.
4. **View Corridors:**
In general the following alley issues were discussed:
- a. **Location**
 - Fairview and Westlake are SEPA view protection corridors
 - Boren provides the best opportunity for views to the lake.
 - How do you restrict / incentivize without jeopardizing other goals (like low base massing along Valley)?
 - Trees could conflict with views.
 - Generally it was thought that it should be a design guideline and review issue. Don't restrict, but let the best design solution be critiqued, and trade-offs weighed for the good of the neighborhood. Codified restrictions don't always provide the best solution or best architectural response.
 - Drought resistant landscaping
5. **Other:**
In general the following alley issues were discussed:
- a. **Drought Resistant Landscaping**
 - b. **E-W trolley line**
 - Possible Harrison / Thomas Couplet, return at Pontius
 - Connect to 1st avenue trolley via 5th north to Republican, West on Republican through Seattle Center to 1st.

Team 2

1. **Street Hierarchy:**
Street use and organization was discussed and formed a departure point for the group.
- a. **Boulevard:**
 - Mercer was described at the "Champs Elysees" with major boulevard improvements.
 - Not great for continuous retail along the entire street, but perhaps at corners, intersection with Terry
 - b. **Great Streets:**
 - All modes of transportation

- Including: Dexter, Aurora, 6th, Fairview, Westlake and Denny'
- Some of these might be considered for boulevards or special landscape, streetscape paving treatments to define the neighborhood.

c. Mixed Use Streets:

- Higher traffic volume but less than "Great Streets";
- Focus on balancing necessary traffic with safe crosswalks, space for pedestrians
- These streets provide secondary connections through neighborhoods.
- Including: 9th Ave., Harrison St. and possibly Republican (not preferred because of adjacency to Cascade Park)

d. "Green" Street:

- Pedestrian oriented
- With traffic
- Curb bulbs with planting area – bio-retention/detention
- Parallel parking allowed
- No blank walls on buildings
- Small retail facing street or active ground floor use.
- Thomas St. – John St. – Harrison
 - o Intermittent retail.
 - o Refer to section for Thomas Street

e. Road Diet / Woonerf Street:

- 8th Ave and Boren specifically
- Maximize green space
- Traffic calming devices
- Characterized by a mix of minimal road area, maximum sidewalk, parking, and lots of planting, trees and stoops
- Include P-Patch Spaces on North and East sides of streets.
- Could be an ideal location for residential stoops
- 8th Ave
 - o Envisioned as a residential street with narrow road section with curb bulbs, parallel parking, wide side walk, residential units with stoops, and growing space at edge
- Boren
 - o Envisioned as a more mixed use street with narrow road section with curb bulbs, parallel parking, wide side walk, stoops, where applicable,, some growing space at edge, bioswales and plaza space
 - o
- John St.
 - o North side of Denny Park should be in character with 8th Ave.
 - o Reduce angled parking

2. View Corridors:

Preserving and accenting View corridors was an important theme in the discussion and the mapping exercise.

a. To Lake Union:

- Westlake Ave. – views are not as prominent to the lake because of trees, and existing buildings. The blocks north of Mercer St. provide the best view to the lake. Westlake also has great views of the city at the intersection at Denny Way.

- Boren Ave. – Provides excellent views to the lake from the hill terminating at Thomas St./John St. One member suggested for a lookout point at John St. and Boren Ave. where there is a view both up Boren to the Lake and west on John to the Space Needle. On John between Boren and Terry consider a hillside garden linkage, stair climb making a connection that doesn't exist now and reinforces this view node.
- Fairview Ave. – Great views from car down to lake and out to Gas Works Park. Most prominent in winter when leaves are off trees.
- Terry Ave – The group noted the importance of the view corridor to the lake and the axial relationship to South Lake Union Park at it's northern terminus. It does not afford views out over the water in the way that Westlake, Boren and Fairview do. Given the focus on Terry as a gateway to the park, the group suggested "framing" the view to the park as an alternative to the traditional idea of building setbacks to open up the view, The group also suggested art features to accentuate the gateway. This element could be located at the intersection of Mercer or Valley.

b. To the Seattle Center and the Space Needle

- Thomas St. – Provides near axial view of Space Needle. Opportunity to design streetscape to allow for view. (trees on North side of street.)
- John St, - View from Boren corner to Seattle Center with new "vertical garden" hill climb (steps) linking to Terry Ave.

3. Alleys:

The following alley issues were discussed.

a. Residential Alleys:

- In residential areas (blocks fronting 8th Ave north of Denny Park & sites in the Cascade Neighborhood) the group discussed breaking down the grid with East/West mid-block connections.
- Similar scale and style as Alley 24.
- Create "people places" on the alleys, and shared use between trucks for service and pedestrians
- New E/W alleys could be an ideal location for residential stoops

4. Transportation Modes:

Following transportation modes were discussed during the charrette.

a. Pedestrian:

- All streets to have adequate space for pedestrians.
- Where possible buffer with planter strip.
- Possible Queen Ann connection over 99 to avoid having to walk down to Mercer St.

b. Bikes:

- Dexter remains as high speed bike connection
- Westlake also has good connection to Fremont
- Bike lanes on major roads would be helpful but not necessary on lower volume streets including Green Streets.
- Lake to Bay Trail:
 - o Fast connection from Seattle Center / Waterfront to SLU Park via 5th Ave to Mercer.
 - o Lower speed connection on Terry or 8th Ave to Denny Park. (some concern about directing bike traffic down a residential street)

c. Street Car:

- Expansion up Westlake
- Connection to Seattle Center

d. Truck Traffic:

- Minimized on streets with pedestrian focus
- Identified Locations:
 - o Thomas St. to Westlake / Fairview – Discussed necessity for freight connection but seen as a conflict with the Thomas Street Green Street Concept. Not preferred by group.
 - o Alternative – 5th Ave to Mercer St. ???

5. Other:

Additional ideas were discussed but not directly related to connections.

a. Important nodes:

- Intersection of Boren Ave & John Street. Has been isolated as an important view corridor with the opportunity for an overlook
- Framing feature on Terry Ave. between Mercer & Valley. This art or building feature should “announce” the park and frame views.

b. Sustainability:

- Visible in all streetscape improvements.
- Incorporate performance into design – “green infrastructure” as major component.
- Food production in planter strips and on green streets.
- Re-orientation to east west direction where possible to improve southerly sun exposure.

c. Retail:

- There was a concern about not dispersing retail too much. It needs to be concentrated to be successful. Two types were identified by group:
 - o Continuous typology – “shopping street” along Westlake and more restaurant focus on south side of new Valley St across from park.) Continuous street frontage in these location
 - o Corner typology – smaller scale, corner stores, residential services most prominent in residential areas.
 - Fairview Ave , Mercer, Thomas and 8th would also benefit from corner retail.

d. Swale on Yale:

- Group liked idea. Expand if possible.

e. 4 Way stops:

- Residential areas should have 4 way stops to help reduce confusion at intersections.
- Especially important for Cascade.

Other General Comments or Observations:

ALL After reviewing these minutes, if you have any comments or corrections, please notify us within seven days of receipt or we will assume you concur with the above.